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ABSTRACT

Students with severe disciplinary problems in the school district are often transferred from school to school. Maintaining classroom discipline continues to be a concern for teachers, parents, and other professionals. This practicum therefore examined ways to minimize the disruptive behavior of problematic "acting out" children. These counseling strategies were designed to reduce the severely disruptive behavior of problematic children and provide alternative behavior structures in the classroom, and to increase comfort levels of teachers when handling these children. Twelve counseling sessions were developed to teach alternative forms of behavior. Children were shown different techniques for management and control of their own behaviors. Modeling and coping mechanisms were also used. Children were given reinforcements for progress. Data were collected before and after the duration of the counseling sessions. Comfort levels of the children were determined by counselor interviews, a checklist, and a questionnaire. All of the objectives were satisfactorily achieved; behavior transfers declined, suspensions were reduced, children exhibited more socially acceptable behaviors, and teachers expressed confidence in their ability to handle minor disruptions effectively. The data suggest that behavior disordered children could be identified and taught to follow rules; that acceptable behavior could be learned through counseling sessions within the school setting; and that children may feel better about themselves after this behavior training. (A student checklist, a teacher questionnaire, a "Smile-O-Gram," and a feedback questionnaire are appended.) (Author/BHK)

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Intervention Strategies to Improve Behavior of Children with Severe Discipline Problems

by

Carol Rosenbaum

Cluster XXXVI

A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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This practicum report was submitted by Carol Rosenbaum under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

March 26, 1991

Date of Final Approval of Report

Mary Ellen Sapp

Mary Ellen Sapp, Ph.D., Adviser

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ABSTRACT

Intervention Strategies to Improve Behavior of Children with Severe Discipline Problems. Rosenbaum, Carol, 1991: Practicum I Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Discipline/Classroom Disruptions/Children's Behavior/Student Cooperation/Middle Childhood/Behavior Disorders/Middle School/Behavior Strategies/Classroom Control/Behavior Interventions/School Conduct/-Class Management

This practicum aimed to reduce the severely disruptive behavior of problematic children. It also attempted to provide alternative behavior structures in the classroom, and to increase comfort levels of teachers when handling these "acting out" children.

Twelve counseling sessions were designed to teach alternative forms of behavior. Children were shown different techniques for management and control of their own behaviors. Modeling and coping mechanisms were also used. Children were given reinforcement for progress displayed during the practicum. In addition, parents and teachers were involved. Data was collected before and after the duration of the counseling sessions. Checklists and questionnaires developed by this writer were used. Feedback information was also collected.

Outcomes of this practicum were very encouraging. All of the objectives were achieved satisfactorily. Behavior transfers declined, suspensions were reduced, children learned how to act in certain situations, and teachers believed they could now handle these minor disruptions. The data from this practicum strongly demonstrated the following: (a) behavior disordered children could be identified and taught to follow rules, (b) acceptable behavior could be learned through counseling sessions within the school setting, and (c) children feel better about themselves after this behavior training.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The work setting is a middle school in a blue collar neighborhood of a large, metropolitan, northeastern city. It is surrounded by many chemical factories, and families work in them from generation to generation. The socio-economic status of these families ranges from the low to the lower middle class income level.

The school has emerged as a comprehensive middle school known for its diversity. It has an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) class, a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) class, eighteen special education classes ranging from mildly handicapped to severely and profoundly impaired, and is also an mentally gifted (MG) center for the district. In 1988-89, the student body consisted of 1025 students with the following composition: 45% white, 35% black, 17% Hispanic, 3% Asian. Its teaching staff of 55 is fully integrated also. This emergence, however, has not been without

problems and sacrifices. For several years, many neighborhood residents have perceived the school as a less than desirable educational setting. A significant number of neighborhood parents have opted to choose parochial schools or other middle schools outside the community. Achievement data suggest that the school population performs in the lower half of schools compared to the entire city. In the past two years, through new leadership and commitment of the staff, it has done much to alter its image in the community and throughout the city. It is no longer perceived as a school that is unsafe and disorderly. At this date, restructuring efforts continue.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer is one of two counselors in the school. She holds a Master's Degree in Counseling and Guidance, and is state certified at the elementary and secondary levels. She also has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education and has taught school for four years prior to working as a counselor. Her primary concern is for the educational progress, developmental needs, and problems of students. Her role involves individual and group counseling, classroom guidance, and crisis intervention (suicide, child abuse, grief counsel-

ing, etc.). In addition, the counselor works with the transitional needs of school beginners and transfer students, and also focuses on career development. The counselor is expected to provide a leadership role in the development of the school improvement plan, coordinate staff development for professional and nonprofessional staff members, and provide a full and complete advisory service to the principal. This counselor has received intensive training in student depression, alcohol, and drug abuse. Subsequently, she became a team member in the Student Assistance Program (SAP) which seeks to identify and help students exhibiting these symptoms. She is available for staff consultation and collaboration, maintains open lines of communication between community agencies, and coordinates clerical tasks.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Students with severe disciplinary problems in the school district are transferred from school to school. Transfer is usually done as a last resort after interventions such as detentions and suspensions prove ineffective. This type of transfer is known as a "21" transfer. Its purpose is to get the child out of an environment where he is having difficulty and into a new environment where the child will have a fresh start. In theory, this sounds good. In practice, it hardly ever works. The child usually seeks out other children with the same inappropriate behaviors and again finds himself in trouble. Within a short time, the child is again "21" transferred to a new school. Parents become frustrated with the continuous changes, students must acclimate to new school settings, and teachers must adjust to having new students added to their class roles at any time.

Problem Documentation

The existence of this problem was documented by interviews, observations, suspension reports and discipline files. During the school year of 1989-90, 52 students were transferred into the school because of disciplinary problems. During the same period, 58 students were transferred out of the school for disciplinary reasons. The discipline records show that all of the students were suspended one or more times prior to the disciplinary transfer.

In 1989, the counselor, along with the special education supervisor and the school psychologist, worked with twenty-two teachers who were having serious problems with out of control students. All of the twenty-two teachers complained about the behavior of these "21" children specifically. An informal survey of these twenty-two teachers revealed that the teachers would have preferred the students be placed elsewhere.

In evaluations written by the classroom teachers for the School Improvement Plan, 37 teachers reported experiencing difficulty managing the behavior disordered students. They complained about the disruptions these students caused, and some said that they

feared the students themselves.

A review of the counseling files showed that in one-to-one counseling interviews, twenty-six out of twenty-nine students interviewed reported that they were unhappy about receiving a disciplinary transfer. The students did not believe that the transfer would effect a change in their behavior patterns. In fact, twenty students told the counselor that such a change provoked them and would cause further problems.

In addition, the counselor informally asked parents about their responses to the discipline transfers of their children. Parents responded with statements such as "It's not going to help." "I know my child. He's been transferred three times before." "Why should this transfer be any different?" All indicated a need for a different approach to the problem.

Causative Analyses

There are several causes for the stated problem. It is believed that many parents do not have the skill necessary to enforce discipline in the home. Some of these parents came from homes in which the only way to insure discipline was to physically punish the

child or "belt" him for his misbehavior. Equally ineffective are those parents who came from homes in which the child was allowed unlimited freedom. Such homes did not enforce curfews, set limits, or provide restrictions. The type of parenting and home background is very important because it shapes the child's attitudes toward authority and discipline.

Because some children lack structure and come from homes with ineffective parents, they did not grow up with appropriate role models to help them learn. Role models, adults and peers, are necessary to teach social norms and responsibility.

Another cause for the failure of the "21" transfer is that teachers lack training in helping them to deal with the out-of-control child. Specifically, teachers complain that they lack the expertise that is necessary to work with the dysfunctional child. Many teachers believe that the problem is psychoeducational and that the child should be referred elsewhere for help. Many times teachers are disapproving before the child even sets foot into the classroom.

Additionally, these severely behavior disordered students do not have outlets for channeling their impulsive behavior. Often, in fact, they are reinforced for this disruptive behavior because it

directs teacher and class attention to them.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Maintaining classroom discipline has always been a factor of significant concern for teachers, parents, and other professionals. The U.S. public has ranked discipline as the number one problem in public schools (Gallup, 1986). Teachers, too, view disciplinary problems as a major concern. Both new and experienced teachers attest to the importance of maintaining classroom order. Forty-nine percent who responded to a survey stated that school discipline was a very serious or fairly serious issue (Gallup, 1984). Even politicians call for tough disciplinary policies as a way to cure society's and educations's policies (Kraig, 1987).

Since the 1970's professional and popular literature have addressed the seriousness of the school discipline issue. It is well established that there is an association between school failure and behavior problems (Kazdin, 1987; Patterson, 1986). Researchers have characterized these behavior disordered students as having trouble using internal controls and being excessively hyperactive (Schworm & Birnbaum, 1989). McKinney (1989) also found that the

students cannot attend to task, cannot focus on details, and have low independence levels. Such behaviors may be sufficient to establish risk for poorer academic progress. Also, teachers are unenthusiastic about having these students in their classrooms. In fact, the behaviorally disordered students are among the least preferred by classroom teachers, who feel that they should be segregated in special classes (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove, & Nelson, 1988). These writers believe that "Expecting general education teachers to welcome, successfully teach and manage, and tolerate the most disruptive and disturbed students is extremely naive and illogical both from the viewpoint of common sense and from the perspective of available research" (Braaten et al, 1988, p. 24).

One pattern that emerges from the literature review is that there is a distinct relationship between behavior disorders (BD) and learning disabilities (LD). Brier (1989) presented data that showed the prevalence of learning disorders among populations of delinquents. Individuals with learning disabilities have been noted to comprise a disproportionately large segment of juvenile delinquency populations (Wallace & Kauffman, 1986). Brier (1989) showed that "individuals with a learning disorder seem to be more likely than

non-learning-disabled individuals to display several of the language, social perception, and social relationship difficulties that have been found to contribute to the development of antisocial behavior. Interaction between these attributes and other factors known to generally predispose individuals to delinquency increases the likelihood of arrest, adjudication, and offender status" (p. 551). Additionally, McKinney (1989) found that children with LD with attentional and classroom management problems (primarily conduct problems) displayed a declining pattern of progress. He states that "Children with learning disabilities and with some patterns of specific behaviors were at significant greater risk for poorer academic outcomes than others who presented different patterns of behavior" (McKinney, 1989, p. 148).

Educators have not developed a consensus on how to handle this problem. Some researchers write about segregating these BD children into special classes. Other researchers (Hallahan, Keller, McKinney, Lloyd, & Bryan, 1988) write that these disruptive children should not be placed in regular classes because they present particular problems. They are defiant, disruptive, abusive, and socially alienated. Sometimes their behavior is even dangerous. It jeopar-

dizes other student's rights to a safe and supportive learning environment. Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove, & Nelson (1988) state the regular classroom provides a humiliating environment which heightens the visibility of these already identified students. They maintain that regular education places inflexible academic performance standards and more stringent policies on its behaviorally disordered students, thus causing an escalating cycle of "failure, frustration, acting out, disciplinary actions, and alienation" (Braaten, et al, p. 24). Still, other researchers take an opposite view (Brady, Swank, Taylor, & Freiberg, 1988). These researchers examined teacher-student interactions in forty middle school social studies classes. The results of their study indicated more permeable boundaries between special and regular education. Their findings show that teachers who received training, and students who received systematic feedback, incidence of conduct disruptions actually decreased.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was to reduce the disruptive behavior of "acting out" students and to provide alternative behavior structures which would help the students exhibit positive behavior patterns in the classroom. A secondary goal was to help the teachers gain more understanding and recognition of the problems so that they could better manage the behavior disordered students. It was hoped that successful management would carry over into other classes.

Behavioral Objectives

1. The number of children transferring out of the middle school for disciplinary reasons would be zero. Such extreme measures would not be necessary due to the intervening actions which will have been taken. Records were kept for these transfers, if they occurred, and the number would be counted.

2. "21" suspensions would be reduced from seventy-five to fifty during the three month period. Other behavior options would be offered as alternatives to suspension. However, a pink slip was generated for every suspension. These documents would be reviewed and counted.

3. Children would feel more comfortable in their new school setting. They would learn what is expected of them, and how to act in certain situations. This comfort level would be determined by counselor interviews, and by a checklist that the children would fill out.

4. Teachers would exhibit increased comfort levels when interacting with these children in the classroom. They would not feel threatened by their students, and they would be able to handle minor behavior disruptions. A questionnaire would be presented to the teachers before and after the practicum to determine if any behavioral changes took place. Also, an open-ended questionnaire would be given to the teachers to provide feedback about the practicum.

Measurement of Objectives

The number of transfers and suspensions were documented by examining the paperwork generated by these procedures. Comfort levels of the children were determined by counselor interviews, and by a checklist (see Appendix A) presented to the students three months after the introduction of the practicum. Also, the children were asked to tally the number of Smile-o-grams (see Appendix C) received for good behavior. A questionnaire (see Appendix B) consisting of check-off responses was presented to the teachers of the students involved in the practicum before and after its conclusion. Finally, an open-ended questionairre (Appendix D) was given to the teachers so that they could provide feedback about the practicum.

After collection of the various instruments, the counselor reviewed the data. A tabulation of the quantity and type of behavior disruptions was identified. The checklists were examined to reveal any trends or improvements. Responses on the pre and post evaluation form for teachers were studied and compared, and a graph was constructed which indicated any movement related to the behavior

goals. Responses were charted for each behavior characteristic. On the questionairre given to the children, consisting of eleven "yes" or "no" responses, a positive response indicated that the objectives were met. Since no standardization method existed for the qualitative methods such as observation and interviews, every effort was made to confirm the results.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

Students with severe disciplinary problems need interventions other than transfers from school to school. There are a number of recommendations for behavior disorders found in the literature. These recommendations include restructuring of goals, family intervention, isolation of observable symptoms, behavior services in the elementary grades, and in-school suspensions.

Fuchs, Fuchs, & Hamlett (1989) were successful in restructuring goals rather than changing curriculum. By setting short term goals, students could master them more quickly, and hopefully, the goals would be adjusted upward whenever the student progressed. They believe educators' goal setting standards typically underestimate students' potential. The goals should be constantly changing, and newly acquired skills may generate into other accepted areas of behavior. In addition, they believe "The goal dictates the material and the conditions with which measurement will occur, the behavior

to be observed, and the criteria for judging attainment" (p. 429). This technique is practical in the counseling setting because it allows the student to progress at his own pace.

Green (1990) describes a family systems approach. He states that "Information processing deficits of children are maintained or amplified by deviant styles of parental communication" (p. 145). The family environment acts on the problem, amplifies it, and carries it into other social networks such as the classroom. Since the family still remains the primary learning environment, he concludes, family intervention programs should be incorporated into any discipline intervention. Other researchers concur that it is necessary to channel the family in order to help the individual (Taylor, Lakin, & Hill, 1988). They would like to see more individualized family support services.

Another approach to handling discipline problems found in the literature involves isolating observable symptoms (Schworm & Birnbaum, 1989). Since these children are erratic, overactive, and impulsive, they may have difficulty using internal controls. Their suggestion is to work on the particular symptom rather than taking the global measures previously suggested. Within the school setting,

this approach could be particularly valuable. Often children are unaware that their behavior follows particular patterns, and they need to be made cognizant of this repetitive behavior.

As has been practiced in the past, suspension and expulsion have often been used to curb unruly students. There are negative effects to using both solutions. These negative effects include loss of instructional time, isolation from peers, encouraging dropouts, decreasing parental and community support, and loss of state aid based on average daily attendance (Chobot & Garibaldi, 1982). A more realistic approach is discussed by Rose (1988). He offers as an alternative in-school suspensions which "counteract many negative side effects by providing instructional time and other support services, such as counseling, in the school context while, at the same time, removing the misbehaving student from the regular school routines" (p. 231). Further, he believes that a critical element in a successful discipline program is stating the contingencies at the outset. Students must know which behaviors are prohibited, which behaviors are expected, and what the consequences of those behaviors will be. Then, consistency must be adhered to.

The literature consistently addresses the need to tie in the

social-emotional component of behavior disorders with learning disabilities (McKinney, 1989, and Ritter, 1989). McKinney successfully identified a variety of behavior characteristics such as distractibility, dependency, and poor task orientation that were associated with student academic outcomes developmentally. His research showed that those with classroom management problems displayed a declining pattern of progress. From this he concludes that intense behaviorally oriented services in the elementary grades could ameliorate the risk of poor outcomes for the student with these unfavorable characteristics. Ritter, on the other side of the issue, reports that teachers rate students as slow, immature, and socially incompetent, when it is really their behavior that is the problem. This exacerbates the social/emotional behaviors that develop subsequently. He suggested that a behavior rating scale be integrated with other forms of assessment before making a differential diagnosis and avoiding misidentification of a problem.

The literature review makes it clear that there is not one solution to the problem of behavior disorders. Evaluation of the possible solutions indicates the need for a combination of strategies to combat this problem. Behavior disorders are not a conglomerate.

They are distinct and different behaviors that stem from a multitude of causes. Each solution presented offers merit, but must be examined to see if it fits the particular situation.

The writer believes that all of the solutions, with the exception of behavior services in the elementary grades, can be implemented in the writer's workplace. It is feasible to try these solutions within the school population and with the resources available during the three month practicum implementation period.

Description and Justification for Solution Selected

The solution strategies selected involved individual counseling, group counseling, family intervention, behavior modeling, and motivation management. Students were identified for individual and group counseling with the primary purpose of reducing maladaptive behavior. These students received an entrance interview, a parental conference, and weekly counseling. The counseling sessions provided alternative behavior structures and reinforcement for positive changes. Every session focused on responsible behavior and respect for others. These strategies were planned to include information

about BD and its effects on people within the school setting. This approach tried to emphasize the learning of new behaviors and the development of a positive self image. These solutions were selected from the literature.

The counselor facilitated all discussions, provided guidance and materials, and contributed toward the goals of appropriate behavior and self esteem.

Report of Action Taken

The solution strategy for this practicum began in October, 1990, after receiving approval to begin the implementation phase of the practicum. Once this approval was obtained, the principal was consulted, and the children were identified. Supplies and other related materials were gathered, and the writer made all the necessary preparations to begin. This involved finding adequate physical accommodations, contacting the children, and calling their parents.

The writer initially met with the fifty-two students to build trust and establish rapport. Each student discussed his initial experience in new situations, and examined his history of past

problems. With the help of the writer, high risk behaviors were identified.

The second step of the solution strategy was parental involvement. The writer met with fifty-four parents to try to enlist their support. Parents were encouraged to accept their children as they are, and think in positive rather than negative terms. They were directed to look for likeable qualities instead of faults. Parents were then reinforced for "positive stroking" such as verbal praise and a pat on the back.

The third step of the implementation strategy involved goal setting. Using Project Self-Esteem (McDaniel & Bielen, 1987), Chapter 3, Exercises D and E, the students discussed realistic goals and specified desired objectives and behaviors. Emphasis was on continuous improvement, and children wrote down mutually agreed upon goals that led toward self help.

The fourth step of the solution strategy introduced children to the contract concept. Children were asked to write in simple terms the tasks to be performed and the specific criteria for completion of the contract. Reinforcing agents such as the smile-o-gram were identified, and a written pact was signed by the students and the

counselor.

The fifth step in the solution strategy focused on decision making. Children received instruction and practice in critical thinking. They were presented a chart that listed decision making skills. They discussed identification of the problem, data gathering, examining options and weighing consequences, and accepting responsibility for the decision. Children were helped to understand that mistakes could be corrected. Then they were given a chance to practice the decision making process in hypothetical situations.

The sixth step in the solution strategy focused on following rules. Decision making skills were reviewed, and a discussion ensued about "imagining life without rules." Children provided examples of what happens when we don't follow rules. Unacceptable behavior was highlighted, and children were given insight into why such behavior was destructive. Alternate behaviors were shown, and children role played consequences of unacceptable behavior.

The seventh step in the solution strategy helped children to deal with pressure. Using Project Self Esteem, (McDaniel & Bielen, 1987), Chapter 3, Exercise C, children were helped to recognize causes of stress. They discussed various coping mechanisms.

Practical suggestions such as walking away from an explosive situation, physical activity, and talking to a friend or teacher were given. Other suggestions such as mental imagery and relaxation were offered, and some practical activities were tried.

The eighth step in the solution strategy helped children to get along with others. The writer read A Friend is Someone Who Likes You (Anglund, 1985). Children discussed expectations of a friend, and how to be a good friend. Components included good communication, respect, and manners. Vignettes which illustrated techniques for effective living were shown.

The ninth step of the solution strategy helped children to deal with peer pressure. A videocassette, "All Bottled Up" (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1988) was shown. Children were taught that they must stand up to peer pressure, and how to do it. Mock situations were enacted.

The tenth step of the solution strategy dealt with the development of self discipline. Building upon previous sessions, children were lead to discover that self discipline is a trait to be valued. Children were helped to assess their feelings and express them appropriately. Following the children's suggestions, a step

chart was created, and continuous reinforcement was provided as often as possible.

The eleventh step in the solution strategy focused on sharing. A favorite teacher was brought in as a resource person. Children shared ideas about what has worked for them. The resource person promoted good communication and generated support among the students. A question and answer session followed.

The final step in the solution strategy involved student assessment. Each pupil was asked to fill out a Personal Inventory (see Appendix A). Then each child was helped to see their own progress and evaluate it.

During the three month implementation phase of this practicum, there were no difficulties or deviations from the implementation plan encountered by the writer. Two students were dropped from the school. One student was dropped because he was transferred to another school. The other student was dropped because he moved to another state. However, these two students were replaced by two incoming "21" students.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DISSEMINATION

Results

The problem that existed in this writer's work setting was that behavioral disordered students who were transferred in to the school did not receive any intervention strategies to help them with their behavioral difficulties. The problem existed because no one took the time or initiative to intervene with appropriate actions. Specifically, the children were left to their own devices which included maladaptive behaviors.

The solution to the problem was to provide individual counseling, group counseling, family intervention, behavior modeling, and motivation management. Each student received an entrance interview, a parental conference, and weekly counseling sessions to teach alternative behavior structures and provide reinforcement for positive changes.

The goals of this practicum were to reduce the disruptive behavior and provide positive behavior applications to help students

exhibit appropriate behavior patterns in the classroom. Additionally, it was hoped teachers would gain more understanding of these problems so that they could better manage the disruptive students in their classes.

Specific objectives were designed to achieve these goals. The following list includes each objective and the results related to the objective.

Objective I: It was projected that during the three month practicum, the number of children transferring out of the school for disciplinary reasons would be reduced to zero. Table I gives the results of this objective as compared to the prior year with no intervention strategies. Unfortunately,children must be transferred out when they hit a teacher. Two children were transferred because of this behavior. An additional 5 children were transferred because they broke the law and were sent to detention centers.

Table I

Comparison of Children Transferring Out of School Due to Disciplinary Transfers*

	Transfers	School Population	Percentage
1989/90	38	1025	4%
1990/91	11	1050	1%

*During three month period from mid October to mid January.

Objective 2: It was projected that the number of suspensions would be reduced from seventy-five to fifty during this period. Table 2 shows the results of these suspensions.

Table 2.

Comparison of the Number of Children Receiving Suspensions.

	Suspensions	School Population	Percentage
1989/90	75	1025	7%
1990/91	45	1050	4%

Objective 3: During the three month implementation, children would feel more comfortable in their new school setting. A check-list (see Appendix A) was presented to the students at the conclusion of the practicum. Students were asked to circle "Yes" or "No" in response to probing statements. Thirty-six of the forty-one students reported that their grades, attitudes, and participation had improved. Twenty-nine of the forty-one students responded that their relationship with friends, teachers, and parents was better. A surprising 40 out of 41 said that they now have better attendance and feel comfortable in class.

A tally of the number of Smile-O-Grams was another indicator of increased positive motivation. Table 3 shows the quantity of Smile-O-Grams received.

Table 3.

Tally of Smile-O-Grams

	Number of Students-41		
Number of Smile-O-Grams	1-5	6-10	More than 10
Tally	9	12	20

Objective 4: During the three month implementation, teachers would exhibit increased comfort levels when interacting with the children in the classroom. Response to Teacher Questionnaire (see Appendix B) and Feedback Questionnaire (see Appendix D) showed that the number of teachers rating student behavior as inappropriate decreased from administration prior to practicum, to administration after conclusion of practicum.

Table 4.

Teacher Response to Behavior Interventions

	Number of teachers	Percentage
Reduction in classroom disturbances	22	100%
Feels child benefited from interventions	22	100

Discussion

To determine the effectiveness of this practicum, qualitative as well as quantitative evidence was examined. The total number of "21" students involved in this practicum was 52. Of this number, 29 students were already placed in the school and 34 students were transferred in during the early phases of the practicum. Eleven were lost due to transfers out.

An examination of Table 1 revealed that although the objective of zero transfers out was not achieved, there was a reduction of disciplinary transfers after the intervention. Eleven of the students were transferred out for disciplinary reasons in 1990/91 as compared to 38 in 1989/90 when no interventions were available.

Table 2 revealed that there was also a drop in the number of

suspensions during the three month implementation period. During 1989/90 there were 75 suspensions. In 1990/91, there were only 45 suspensions representing a net drop of 30.

The number of students receiving Smile-O-Grams was 41 with 20 students being in the more than 10 group. Counselor interviews found that children strived to get these Smile-O-Grams. This was interpreted to mean that they indeed served as a positive reward.

In addition, the feedback questionnaire (see Appendix D) presented to the teachers after the practicum found that all twenty-two teachers concurred that there was a reduction in classroom disturbances, and that the children benefited from the counseling interventions. Suggestions regarding future programs included broadening the scope of the program to include all disruptive children. A review and interpretation of the data collected indicate that although all of the goals were not achieved at the levels anticipated, significant improvements occurred for each objective. The results confirmed the writer's expectations that disruptive behavior was reduced, and students exhibited better behavior patterns in the classroom.

Based on the results of the practicum, the writer concludes

that intervention strategies are a necessary part of changing maladaptive behavior. Counseling, modeling, and reinforcement do work. Together, they help children feel better about themselves, and they help reduce classroom disturbances. The writer also concludes that this intervention program was successful and should be incorporated into the "21" transfer process.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that behavior disordered children be identified early so that they may participate in an intervention program.
2. It is recommended that this intervention program be continued on a regular basis for all incoming "21" students.
3. It is also recommended that teachers receive in-service training to help them better understand and deal with these difficult children.

Dissemination

This practicum has been shared with, and made available to the school faculty.

The writer will submit copies of the practicum to the special

education supervisor for dissemination within the district.

The writer will also share practicum results with other counselors at a quarterly in-service guidance meeting.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENT CHECKLIST

Student Checklist

Circle "Y" (yes) or "N" (no)

In your opinion:	YES	NO
My grades have improved.	Y	N
There is an increase in my class participation.	Y	N
I complete assignments.	Y	N
I set realistic goals.	Y	N
My attitude has improved.	Y	N
There is better attendance.	Y	N
I have a better relationship with my friends.	Y	N
I have a better relationship with my teachers.	Y	N
I have a better relationship with my parents.	Y	N
I feel good about myself.	Y	N
I feel comfortable in class.	Y	N

APPENDIX B

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Student Name:

Date:

Teacher Questionnaire

Please check all appropriate responses:

Academic Performance

___Drop in grades

___Decrease in class participation

___Short attention span

___Failure to do assignments

Disruptive Behavior

___Defiant

___Irresponsible

___Sudden Outbursts

____Fighting

___Obscene language or gestures

Illicit Behavior

___Theft

___Destruction of property

___Possession of drugs

___Selling drugs

___Carrying a weapon

Comments:

APPENDIX C

SMILE-0-GRAM

SMILE-O-GRAM

WE'RE SO HAPPY!

I'M PROUD OF YOU!

TO: _____

COMMUNICATION: _____

_____

_____

FROM: _____

APPENDIX D

FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you found a reduction in the number of disturbances (caused by the referred child) in your classroom?
2. Do you feel the child has benefited from the counseling interventions?
3. List any suggestions you may have regarding future programs.